NEWS ANALYSIS 1-0483 APRIL 1, 1976
CHARLES MEDD

REAGAN'S T.V. APPEAL

ANNCR: REPUBLICAN RONALD REAGAN APPEARED ON NATIONAL TELEVISION WEDNESDAY NIGHT IN AN APPEAL FOR SUPPORT FOR HIS PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN. CHARLES MEDD HAS THIS REACTION.

VOICE: THE MESSAGE WAS THE SAME, BUT THE MEDIUM WAS NEW. IN AN EFFORT TO REACH A NATIONAL AUDIENCE, RONALD REAGAN SPENT HALF AN HOUR ON TELEVISION OUTLINING WHAT HE HAS BEEN TELLING SMALLER GROUPS OF REPUBLICAN VOTERS OVER THE PAST TWO MONTHS. THE FORMER CALIFORNIA GOVERNOR AGAIN DIRECTED MUCH OF HIS CRITICISM AGAINST WHAT HE CALLS THE AIMLESS "WANDERING" OF AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY. ONCE MORE, HE CHARGED THAT THE UNITED STATES HAS LOST ITS MILITARY SUPREMACY TO THE SOVIET UNION AND CHALLENGED THE PRESIDENT AND THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE TO SAY OTHERWISE.

UNDERLINING THE REAGAN THESIS IS HIS LONG-HELD CONTEMPT FOR SOVIET COMMUNISM AND HIS DOUBT THAT LASTING PEACE CAN BE ACHIEVED THROUGH NORMAL DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS. AS HE HAS FOR THE PAST SEVERAL WEEKS, THE REPUBLICAN CHALLENGER HAD SOME HARSH COMMENTS FOR SECRETARY OF STATE HENRY KISSINGER WHOM HE FINDS OVERLY TRUSTFUL OF SOVIET INTENTIONS. THE RECENT HELSINKI DECLARATION, MISTER REAGAN SAID, HAD, IN EFFECT, GIVEN THIS COUNTRY'S APPROVAL TO WHAT HE CALLED SOVIET "ENSLAVEMENT OF THE CAPTIVE NATIONS." AND IN HIS SHARPEST ATTACK ON MISTER KISSINGER TO DATE, THE CALIFORNIAN-- QUOTING FROM AN UNPUBLISHED BOOK -- SAID THE SECRETARY, BY ALLEGEDLY COMPARING THE UNITED STATES TO ATHENS AND THE SOVIET UNION TO SPARTA, HAD ALREADY CONCEDED THE ULTIMATE DECLINE OF WESTERN

CIVILIZATION. MISTER KISSINGER CALLED THE QUOTATION "A CONTEMPTIBLE, IRRESPONSIBLE INVENTIONS, AND STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS POINTED OUT THAT THE SECRETARY HAD REFUTED THESE AND SIMILAR CHARGES AT HIS RECENT NEWS CONFERENCE IN DALLAS.

FOR THOSE WHO HAVE FOLLOWED THE REAGAN CAMPAIGN THROUGH THIS YEAR'S FIRST SIX STATE PRIMARY ELECTIONS, THE TELEVISED SPEECH COVERED WHAT WAS LARGELY FAMILIAR TERRITORY, A FACT QUICKLY NOTED BY A PRESIDENTIAL SPOKESMAN. DESPITE HIS UPSET VICTORY IN LAST WEEK'S NORTH CAROLINA PRIMARY, MISTER REAGAN IS IN SERIOUS POLITICAL TROUBLE. HE IS TRAILING THE PRESIDENT IN THE ALL-IMPORTANT MATTER OF DELEGATES TO THE REPUBLICAN NOMINATING CONVENTION, AND HE FACES FINANCIAL PROBLEMS AS WELL. BY TURNING TO TELEVISION, AT A COST TO HIS OWN CAMPAIGN OF AN ESTIMATED ONE HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS, MISTER REAGAN WAS AIMING AT A CONSTITUENCY LARGER THAN THE ONE THAT VOTES IN REPUBLICAN PRIMARIES. WHAT HE NEEDS NOW IS MONEY, AND HIS SPEECH ENDED WITH A DIRECT APPEAL FOR JUST THAT.

THERE IS NO QUESTION ABOUT RONALD REAGAN'S EFFECTIVENESS BEFORE A TELEVISION CAMERA, NOR HIS ABILITY TO ARTICULATE THE DOUBTS OF MILLIONS OF AMERICANS. BUT MOST OF THESE SAME AMERICANS KNOW THERE IS LITTLE DIFFERENCE IN THE POLITICAL PHILOSOPHIES OF THE REPUBLICAN CHALLENGER AND GERALD FORD. AND, IN THE EYES OF MOST POLITICAL OBSERVERS, IT WILL TAKE MORE THAN A NEW MEDIUM TO CHANGE THAT BASIC VIEW.

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